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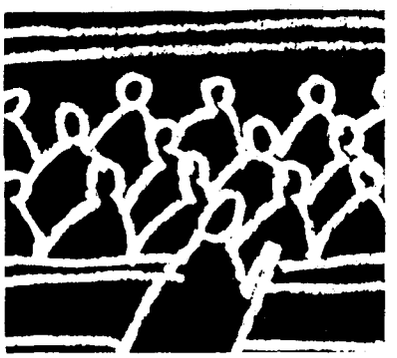
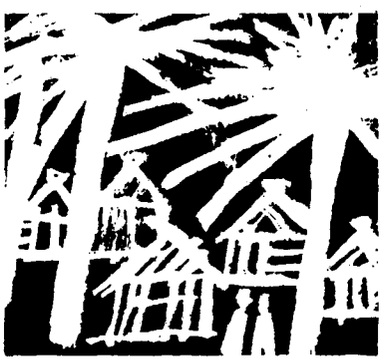


CONFESSIONS OF A MIDDLE-AGED MORALIST



ALTERNATIVES IN RHODESIA

BOOKS ***WILLIAM HAMILTON*** *on PAUL VAN BUREN*
JOSH GREENFELD *on NORMAN MAILER*
DAN WAKEFIELD *on JAY NEUGEBOREN*

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NEWS AND VIEWS

Even keen partisans of the Berrigan brothers are having difficulty understanding their newest protest against the war in Vietnam: the seizing of files from a Catonsville, Md., Selective Service office and the incineration of these with home-made napalm.

Wasn't the point made a couple of months ago when Father Phil Berrigan poured duck's blood into a Baltimore draft office's files, and Father Dan Berrigan publicly endorsed the action?

Only partially, obviously.

For reasons that are probably psychological, and most certainly religious and humanitarian, a term in jail has become essential to the Berrigan brothers for the fullness of their witness. And what surer way for them to win jail than for the two to be accomplices in a raid on a draft office—Father Phil Berrigan while he is free on his own recognizance, awaiting sentence for a conviction on a similar charge of mutilating government property; and Father Dan Berrigan while espousing a commitment to radical action until jailed.

The whole business doesn't make sense to most people, but it does to those who know the Berrigan brothers intimately and grasp the anguish which is theirs over the enormity of the evil of the Vietnam war. These people can not only give intellectual assent to the radicalism of the Berrigan brothers, but can so frame the existential logic of the Berrigans that an action such as that in Catonsville becomes a gentle, not violent, gesture, a defendable means to a positive end—imprisonment.

There is undoubtedly a measure of romance and rationalization in this thinking, but it is not to be dismissed contemptuously. The world would be better off with more rather than fewer Berrigans, and it will profit from their witness, impractical though this may occasionally appear to be.

An idea of what motivates the Berrigans will be conveyed in the book (*Night Flight to Hanoi*) which Dan Berrigan has written for publication next September, and the manuscript of which he mailed to Macmillan just an hour or two before the torch was set to the napalm in Catonsville. The book discusses Berrigan's recent trip to North Vietnam as intermediary in the release of two captured Americans; its foreword, which Berrigan circulated to a few intimates, anticipated the events in Catonsville. It provides what seems to be intentional documentation of the "purpose and forethought" of that action, (perhaps to make it easier for the law to convict him), and opens insight into the intensity of the man's feelings. Dan Berrigan writes:

"Our apologies, good friends, for the fracture of good order, the burning of paper instead of children, the angering of the orderlies in the front parlor of the charnel house. We could not, so help us God, do otherwise. For we are sick at heart; our hearts give us no rest for thinking of the Land of Burning Children. And for thinking of that other Child, of whom the poet Luke speaks."

Passionate? Yes . . . Foolhardy? Don't be too sure.

It is very easy to write off Catonsville and similar incidents as serving little beyond the satisfaction of the religious and psychological impulses of those protesting. This is unfair. Such actions have high purpose and call attention to a bevy of injustices; economic and racial, as well as military.

So it was with the demonstrators at Catonsville. Their aim was not only to protest the war (though they are aware here of new urgencies, with the popular delusion that because there are talks in Paris there is peace in Vietnam). It was also to protest American "economic oppression" across the world; to protest the imbalance of wealth aggravated by U.S. enterprise; and to dramatize the neglect at home to the poor, particularly poor blacks.

This is written as though there were the Berrigans at Catonsville and no others. There were, of course, nine colleagues. Dan Berrigan speaks of himself and them in his foreword: "Our record is bad; trouble-makers in church and state, a priest married despite his vows, two convicted felons. We have jail records, we have been turbulent, uncharitable, we have failed in love for the brethren, have yielded to fear and despair and pride, often in our lives. Forgive us."

But of forgiveness there is no need. Better there be gratitude.

•

National Catholic Reporter's Bob Hoyt has again been passed over for the Catholic Press Association's annual award for distinguished service, this time in a competition that was the weakest in (a) all the years the award has been given, and (b) all the years that Hoyt has been a nominee—eight in the 10-year history of the award.

Which proves again that there's something faulty about the competition.

On paper, the procedure should work. The method is for names to be proposed, their number to be thinned by a screening committee, and the finalists voted on by the registered agents of the Association's member publications.

Hoyt's consistent nomination for the award (every year since 1961) dispels question about the first and intermediate steps. The problem is in the balloting. The CPA voting membership refuses to give the award to the one person out of an entire generation of editors who year in and year out makes the greatest single contribution to Catholic journalism in the U.S.

So how do you correct matters? You probably don't—at least not without first changing the narrow intellectual character of the majority doing the voting. Which is a hopeless prospect.

Bob Hoyt, it seems, is fated to be a runner-up until some self-effacing designee for the award stands before the Catholic Press Association, lectures it on its delinquency, and declines the award on grounds that its presentation is farcical until Hoyt is honored.

On several counts the appropriate moment for such a gesture was at the CPA convention last month in Columbus. It was let pass. JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Present Arms

Pleasantville, N.Y.

To the Editors: John Deedy's item anent the "commercial contretemps of Abercrombie & Fitch," and his statement that "there is something sick about the exaltation of guns and the shooting sports" (News & Views, May 3) proves one thing—that a sedentary intellectual view of a sport and/or a hobby is not the most discerning analysis of that activity.

What is amazing is the lack of objective reasoning concerning gun regulations on the part of those who engage in the more aristocratic sports, such as tennis or golf, or who dislike hunting or target shooting. To them, the panacea for curing violence is to legislate against the use of tools used to commit mayhem. This says to the criminal "thou shalt not buy a gun or a tool to further your foul deeds." The criminal, having a total disregard for law, pays scant attention to such rules . . .

On May 4, a 62-year-old woman struck and killed a 12-year-old girl at Cape May Court House, N.J., *after* she had been arrested for drunken driving. This 12-year-old admittedly was not a Martin Luther King, but she was a life and just as important from that standpoint. This is not an isolated instance of the misuse of liquor and/or that most potent of all lethal weapons—the automobile, which kills about 55,000 people each year. Ergo, let us pass more legislation to curb the drinking of liquor and the use of automobiles. This action I am sure will have just as much effect upon the misuse of liquor and cars as the prohibition licensing and regulation of guns will have upon the criminal's use of weaponry in the commission of crimes.

H. E. MEISNER

Reply

The analogy is deceptive. Neither automobiles nor alcohol are *per se* destructive; nor are either free of regula-

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TROUBLED PEACE TALKS

The most predictable developments of the Paris peace talks were that North Vietnam would use them for propaganda advantage, and that the United States would strike poses of singular righteousness. Neither has disappointed expectations. For days the North Vietnamese delegation, through public denunciations and exhibitions of American materiels of war, threatened to turn the Paris meeting into a continuation of the Stockholm War Crimes Tribunal. The American delegation responded predictably, with feigned weariness and pledges to endure until the North Vietnamese had satisfied psychological urges to influence world opinion and were willing to settle down to serious discussion. If the North Vietnamese tactic was somewhat jejune—after all, how could the North Vietnamese seriously maintain that they had no troops in South Vietnam?—the American posture could only be termed supercilious. As it continues, it might be slick and sophisticated, but it is essentially perverse and in many ways more threatening to the continuance of the Paris talks than the heavy strategy of the North Vietnamese. It reveals the U.S. strategy for peace to be as deluding and self-serving as it has been for war.

President Johnson documented the nature of the American "commitment" to peace the other day when he awarded a Presidential Unit Citation to the defenders of Khesanh and at the same time vowed that the United States would not relax on the battle fronts while peace talks were going on in Paris. Thus with the one ceremony was affirmed American determination to fight on in Vietnam and American unwillingness to recognize North Vietnamese withdrawal from Khesanh as the most obvious of reciprocal gestures which the U.S. demands of the North Vietnamese toward deescalation of the war. Stated simply, the American objective is still to achieve a military solution, with as little honor as possible conceded the adversary.

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The citing of the Khesanh defenders was patently contrived, and amounted to little more than a clumsy attempt to manage the judgment of history by getting on the record a statement of adjusted facts. Since history has a way of sorting out such contrivances, the citing of the Khesanh defenders is important only for the affront which it constitutes to the goodwill of the North Vietnamese. This is serious enough, but not nearly so much as the affirmation to fight. For here is exposed the block in the Administration's psyche: a mindset against recognizing any legitimacy to the revolution in Vietnam. Under the circumstances, it is quite easy to press offensives such as Operation Complete Victory in the Saigon theater and the Ashau Valley sweep and then cynically classify these as reluctant responses to a "fight and negotiate" policy of the North Vietnamese. The facts were plain even before the Chicago *Daily News* uncovered the secret directive to U.S. field commanders, issued three days *after* the U.S. and North Vietnam had agreed to meet in Paris and ordering an "all-out" effort to win the war in three months: if the North Vietnamese are now on the offensive, the escalation of hostilities in Vietnam is still decidedly American in origin.

The consequences of unrelenting U.S. military aggressiveness are tragic both in terms of human life and hopes for the Paris talks. Casualties are reaching record highs and the North Vietnamese, correctly labeling the American peace posture as perfidious, hint about breaking off talks. They have their grounds, though, as Senator Mark Hatfield has suggested, it could be disastrous if they did; it might be all that is needed to pitch Americans from a peace mood into a war fever.

The unfortunate turns of the war in Vietnam and the talks in Paris point up a regrettable phenomenon of the decision to open negotiations toward peace: the silencing of those responsible for prodding the Administration toward negotiations. The "containment" of the peace movement by agreement to talk in Paris was perhaps inevitable, but the condition should only be temporary. Too many policy goals remain to be identified, and these obviously cannot be left to the discretion and judgment of the Administration and its negotiators, not if the best interests of all the Vietnamese are to be served.

Pressure from those opposed to the war must again be made felt, beginning with a demand for a halt to U.S. bombing and a cease-fire in the ground fighting. Effective bombing halts and cease-fires have been arranged at other times in the war, for occasions far less auspicious than "official conversations" between the belligerents; there is no reason why they should not and cannot be arrranged now. The initiative here belongs clearly to the United States, since it is the U.S. that is doing the bombing, launching the offensives, and thus determining the intensity of current fighting.

BUST NO. 2 AT COLUMBIA

DANIEL CALLAHAN

10:30 PM: Children in bed, all quiet; working, as usual, on deep theological problem; WKCR-FM (Columbia student station) playing in background. Hear announcer say that cops are expected shortly; Dean Coleman has said that demonstrators will be removed from Hamilton Hall if they don't leave voluntarily. They're not leaving; the bust is coming. A thought: why not drive down to Columbia? Good idea, not far away, new car to get me there; after an hour deep theological problems becoming a bore. You can think about God any old time, but demonstrations and busts are scheduled less frequently. A problem: what to wear? My usual *Commonweal* Executive Editor costume? (Dark suit, discreet tie, clean white shirt, short hair cut, shaved jowls.) No good. Might be mistaken for professor. Or for editor of respectable Catholic journal. Either one deadly for encountering students. Go as you are: sneakers, khaki pants, dirty jacket, hair uncombed. Anyway, if picked up by police can produce identification showing I am actually high-ranking editor of distinguished, safe, moderate periodical. That is, have it both ways, as usual.

11:00 PM: Find parking place next to Union Theological Seminary. Recall, from teaching stint at Union, elaborate warnings about parking car in Morningside Heights area: lock up tight, remove all valuables, watch out. Wish that new car wasn't so conspicuous; too tempting a target. But no choice, only space around. Maybe, if I'm lucky, *they'll* leave my car alone.

11:10 PM: Walk on campus, proceed to Hamilton Hall. Large crowd on steps and all around. Festive atmosphere. Facade of Hamilton marked with egg shells and yolk-drippings; candles burning in windows; "STOP SDS" says a banner hanging on an adjoining building; bunch of clean-cut "jocks" in Columbia athletic jackets cursing at "pukes" in Hamilton (my thanks to WKCR for identifying the teams); on one side a wooden storm fence being torn down—a well-rounded university education these days draws on human experience and tradition, e.g., you'll get the hell beat out of you (human experience) if, when the cops charge (tradition), you're caught behind a fence with no exit; on other side of broken fence bonfires burn on the South Lawn, fed by newspapers and combustible fencing slats; on the steps of Hamilton a father of one of the demonstrators inside shouts a

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fervent speech about what a monster Columbia University is; hearing him, I wonder what happened to the generation gap, but am comforted to note that his rhetoric is slightly different from that of the students; I recall, at that moment, one of the memorable testimonials of our time, Mark Rudd's mother saying "My son, the revolutionary."

11:30-2:00 AM: Wander from one end of campus to another. See cars being towed away on 116th St., replaced by large, windowless police vans in long lines; old-fashioned paddy wagons, I suppose, have gone out of style—vans more commodious, suitable, efficient for the purposes at hand. Listen to cops and reporters and pick up consistent information that bust expected between 1-2 AM. Can't wait; that's what I came for. But nothing happens; rumors fly about 500, 700, 1,000 policemen massing in buses out of sight twenty blocks down Amsterdam Avenue. Where are they, why don't they come? In answer to this question black reporter with walky-talky says don't worry, they're coming, it's all planned and timed, they'll be here, they know what they're doing. Thus reassured, keep walking. Back at Hamilton public plans are being laid: demonstration leaders invite more spectators to come in with them, state they will not leave, pledge passive resistance. Toward 2 AM legs becoming tired, sense of tedium building up, beginning to wonder why I didn't stay home. Past my bedtime. What am I doing here anyway?

2:10 AM: Come upon two students digging bricks out of the pavement, ring of spectators watching them, some remonstrating. Watch scene for a moment, feel ill; this is no good, I say to myself. Good cause, bad methods. Decide to intervene. Tell students to put the bricks down, using best authoritative adult tone; back up tone with reasonable arguments about uselessness of brick-throwing, futility of violence, trying to recall some of fine lines I've written on nonviolence. Dialogue does not proceed very far, handicapped by student response of "fuck you." Some more philosophical colleagues of the brick-diggers inform me that "this is only self-defense," and others remind me of the success the Paris students had with paving stones. Philosophical discourse thus failing, I make existential decision to physically impede students. I tell them they'll have to walk over my passively resisting body when they try to carry bricks away. They proceed to walk over my passively resisting body. I then get less passive and start chasing them across campus, attempting to pull bricks from their hands. They cuff me around and block me out; no one joins my team; they're younger and bigger, so I lose. The chase ends at the Amsterdam Avenue entrance, where a barricade has been put up, topped with yelling students raising their hands with the Churchillian Victory gesture. The bricks are being piled up next to a tree, with a couple of student guards posted. I argue with the guards a bit, repeating my wise convictions; I get nowhere so I just stand around helplessly; I feel like weeping, and am also mad with myself for being so ineffectual (a sometime professor of philosophical theology, well-educated, sharp mind, I keep telling myself, should do better). As I stand about nursing my offended values and battered ego, police appear in the windows of Hamilton. They have come through tunnels and easily taken the building, leading the occupants out quietly and unobtrusively. In a moment of pique I shout gloatingly at the brick sentries "you lose." I immediately feel guilty about that, sorry I said it. I am here on the side of the students, at least 93.2% on their side, the remaining percentage points being devoted to old-style liberal reservations about some of their tactics. For a minute, though, I find myself hating them, anyway hating my opponents in the brick chase-and-frolic. But I'm too tired by now to keep the hate going and, anyway, there are other things to be seen. (Someone later asked me if I thought these students were "representative"; how would I know?)

3-4 AM: More wandering. Though the police have taken Hamilton Hall, they haven't appeared yet on the rest of the campus. Outside the barricades, on 116th St. they are lined up by the hundreds, most impressive with their helmets and billy clubs, all the majesty of law and order displayed in disciplined columns. But they just stand there, greeted by an occasional firecracker tossed through the fence and a rich assortment of invective. Tighter, grimmer faces around me now. One game the crowd inside plays is trying to spot the plainclothesmen. I join in, finding some choice specimens of fake students, ill-disguised by unkempt clothes; others are dead giveaways, older, tougher, neater, crew cuts. While this sport goes on, a fire is spotted on the sixth floor of Hamilton. Two windows glow red. Soon some glass up there is broken and the spray from a fire hose shoots out. The fire gives way to billows of smoke; there is some booing from the spectators, but also much muttered disgust that someone had set a fire in the building; that was too much. The fire out, my fatigue mounting, I lie down on the grass. Nearby I hear a small group talking about all the bricks they have collected; this is a different crowd, not my original collection of friends. I feel sick again, but this time I just stay silent, continuing to lie there, getting more apprehensive about the whole place. Shortly I get up, deciding the time has come to go home; maybe the police aren't ever coming in tonight and, well, if they do I don't think I want to be on the playing field when the resistance play begins between the brick-throwers and the club-wielders.

4-5 AM: After climbing over the barricade at the Broadway entrance, I start walking to my car, wondering whether it will still be there. After walking a block, though, I decide that it is silly to leave now, maybe something would happen later on, probably just after I left, and I'd feel ridiculous reading about it in the paper the next day when I could have seen it for myself (can't

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seem to make up my mind about anything tonight). Yet I decide against going back inside. A good compromise between my apprehension about a police attack and my desire to see the show is to hang around outside. So I hang around at Broadway and 116th St. It is a relatively quiet spot. Police are here too, but they don't have helmets on like their associates on Amsterdam Avenue; and they are in a light, joking mood. We all, cops and spectators, laugh at the Barnard girls in a dorm across the street who periodically chant in unison the main slogan at Columbia for the past month. "up against the wall motherfucker" (whatever happened to the Sweetheart of Sigma Chi?); it's not really a funny expression but at 4:30 AM, with the smell of violence all around, it is a nice tame bit of diversion. Laughing like that, the cops don't appear vicious; or is that something they turn on and off? Then a scuffle breaks out at the Broadway and 116th St. barricade; an anti-demonstration group of students inside manages to pull the barricade down. Immediately they are attacked by other students; the police go in and try to break up the fight. Quickly they come back out, apparently on the orders of an officer; one policeman is limping, supported by two others. The cops curse among themselves, making clear that they don't like being ordered out of the fray; "what are we, just a bunch of pawns?" one of them yells. "Yes," I answer to myself. The barricade goes back up. I stand around some more. Finally, I decide that nothing more is going to happen; I'm dead tired; time now, really, to go home. Before I go, pick up words of a knot of spectators; looking at the barricade, they indulge their fantasy life: "you could sure clear that place fast with a .50 cal. machine-gun," one says. "Yeh," the others reply, delighted at the thought. Even here, though, no unity; they argue among themselves about merits of different weapons.

5:00 AM: Again, I start walking toward my car. On the way, I spot an open gate, somehow not locked or barricaded. I go in, unable to resist one more look. In the middle of the campus, a large crowd is gathered around someone speaking through a bullhorn. I can't hear what he's saying. I watch a bit, things appear moderately quiet, then leave. My car is still there.

8:00 AM: After two hours sleep, I put on my *Commonweal* costume and go to work. Hear on the radio that at 5:05 AM, minutes after I left, the police broke through the barricades, came in swinging their clubs; peace was violently restored. The man with a bullhorn I'd heard unclearly turns out to have been a dean telling everyone to clear the campus or else. Or else happened. So I missed the big, nasty bust after all. Not sorry. Whole thing ugly, whole night unhappy mess; had seen enough, too much. Later news reports said that 51 students and faculty members injured by police attacks; and 17 policemen injured, many by thrown bricks. Score: almost 3-to-1 in favor of cops. Usual outcome. Systematic violence more effective than amateur stuff. You can't develop effective brick-throwers overnight out of middle-class Columbia students. They'll do better the next time. Philosophical problem, the old one about causality: who caused all the trouble at Columbia? Answer: trustees begot Kirk who begot administration who begot unhappy students who begot Mark Rudd who begot demonstrators who begot cops who begot bust No. 1 which begot new demonstrators who begot bust No. 2 which begot brick-throwers who begot mad cops who begot blood. All causal chains, as the philosopher said, must be traced to their source.

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TAPPING PENNSYLVANIA'S TILL

SERVICES FOR SALE

Almost a year has passed since the first "State Nonpublic School Authority Act" was introduced into the General Assembly of Pennsylvania. It passed the Assembly and now goes to the Senate where stronger opposition is expected. The various versions of the bill, which would grant state financial aid to nonpublic school students, have caused open strife between Pennsylvania's Governor and Catholic hierarchy, the State Department of Public Instruction and the Catholic school systems, between Catholic newspapers and groups opposing the measure.

The bill being considered was devised by Representative Martin P. Mullen (D.-Phila.) to satisfy both the State and Federal Constitutions. The legislation is a unique blend of two concepts: A State Nonpublic School Authority and the "purchase of services" from private and parochial schools. The Authority would be financed by a percentage of the state's recently-increased cigarette tax of 18¢ a package.

Under the "purchase of services" concept, which has already been declared federally constitutional, many states, including Pennsylvania, offer such services as dental and medical care to parochial school children.

The Pennsylvania State Constitution, however, declares that: "No money raised for the support of the public schools shall be appropriated to or used for the support of any sectarian school." The establishment of an independent "Authority" to contract for the services could get around this article of the Constitution. The decision of the United States Supreme Court on the New York Textbook Law will be important in deciding this aspect of the Pennsylvania proposal.

In the meantime, the Pennsylvania Catholic Confer-

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ence, which is the Bishops' lobby in Harrisburg, and its attorney, William B. Ball, have kept up steady pressure to get the aid bill before the legislature for a vote. In the legislature itself, the battle has been led by Representative Mullen, a veteran campaigner for the Bishops on such issues as school busing and forbidding social workers to suggest contraception devices to persons on relief. Organizing his forces, Mullen called for "massive help." By September, the campaign was focused on pressuring the Governor to act, under the threat of branding him as an enemy of the parents of the 600,000 nonpublic school students (one quarter of the state's total enrollment). The Philadelphia diocesan newspaper put it bluntly in a front-page editorial: "Catholics of the Commonwealth now know that they cannot number among [their] friends Governor Raymond P. Shafer and the Republican leadership in Harrisburg. We Catholic taxpayers have been patient with this administration too long. . . ."

Telegrams and letters literally flooded the Governor's office and the legislature. Seventy thousand letters in support of the bill came from the Philadelphia area alone. In Pittsburgh the campaign took on the atmosphere of a crusade, led by Superintendent of Schools, Auxiliary Bishop John B. McDowell. Each parish was contacted and asked for at least ten telegrams from parishioners. Mimeographed circulars were passed out at the doors of all Catholic churches, calling the proposed legislation the "*Magna Carta* for nonpublic education in the United States."

While the grass-roots strategy was thus forming, Representative Mullen was working in the legislature. During the summer he had nearly succeeded in wrecking the Governor's 1968 budget and tax program by refusing to allow it out of the House Appropriations Committee (Mullen is the minority chairman) until Shafer promised consideration of the parochial school aid bill. The tension brought the Governor and the Pennsylvania trade mission he was accompanying back early from Europe to meet with the Catholic Bishops. It was then announced that two of the key Bishops were leaving for Europe (for the Roman Synod) and would thus be unavailable.

Official telegrams flowed back and forth between the Chanceries and the Governor's office. Charges and countercharges were daily news items. The Bishops wanted the Governor to meet with their representatives; Shafer flatly refused to attend any meeting where William Ball would be present. In mid-September the comic opera ended with a meeting of the Governor and two Bishops. Neither side was satisfied, but tempers cooled somewhat.

The arguments in support of the bill stress its great saving to the state, estimated by the Catholic officials to be $350 million yearly. "Catastrophe" was prophesied for the public schools if the Catholic system were to shut down from lack of funds. Another argument for the bill, its sponsors contend, is the work done by Catholic schools for the Negroes and the poor. Philadelphia's Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools, Msgr. Edward T. Hughes, predicted in April that unless help is forthcoming, parochial schools would be "forced to impose rising tuition charges, which will mean a virtual withdrawal from our primary apostolate in the poor and Negro areas."

Catholic opponents of state aid cite the opposite arguments. Father Donald McIlvane of Pittsburgh's "Hill District," a Negro slum, testified before the House Basic Education Committee holding hearings that, "The Catholic school system is making only feeble efforts at integration of its schools. There is absolutely no public plan for integration, such as has been ordered by the Pittsburgh Board of Education, or by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission for school systems throughout the state. . . . You will be simply furthering delays in achieving integration by any across-the-board aid given to Catholic schools. . . . There is growing opposition within the Negro community to the all-white or virtually all-white private schools which operate sometimes only blocks from the public schools with a large Negro enrollment." A resolution of the state NAACP opposes the legislation on the same grounds.

Dr. Edward Cahill, who teaches sociology at Villanova University, came to a similar conclusion as a result of his studies of the Philadelphia archdiocesan school system where only 2 percent of the students have any experience of what might be called an integrated education. Cahill contends that there is "a clear pattern of '*de facto*' segregation existing in the archdiocesan school system." Further, he claimed, "there have been very few effective policies for changing that pattern. This legislation is another slap in the face for the poor." Both Dr. Cahill and Fr. McIlvane favor state aid to parochial schools only in poverty areas.

An interesting development in the legislative wrangle is that the modified bill which passed the General Assembly was sponsored by six Philadelphia Republicans rather than Democrat Mullen. Sponsorship now seems to carry with it heavy political benefits, especially in the eastern end of Pennsylvania.

Catholic officials have attempted to counter objections to the aid bill by welcoming stringent state regulations along with the subsidy. Parochial school officials say they are more interested in getting a state Authority established than in any specific funds. Ball believes the amount can be negotiated once the Authority is set up.

So the battle continues, presaging another long hot summer as a new budget comes before the legislature and an election campaign moves into full swing. So far contenders for virtually every office have been forced to declare their support or non-support for the aid bill. The next six months should be interesting.

JOHN W. GROUTT

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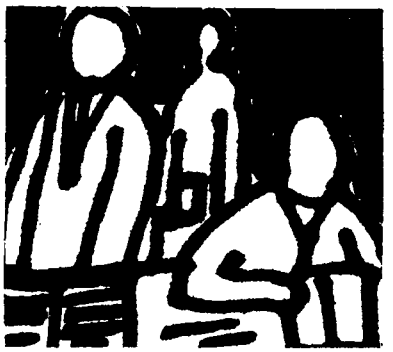
CONFESSIONS OF A MIDDLE-AGED MORALIST

Peering across the generation gap

ROBERT ZOELLNER



I am a college teacher, a member of that beyond-30 age-group which college-age Americans have been repeatedly advised not to trust—the implication being that they ought rather to trust themselves. I think that that is very good advice for any young person coming of age in the '60s. The core of the problem, of course, is the generation gap, which I can perhaps best illustrate with a personal anecdote.

I am one of the millions of more or less middle-aged American males who long ago discovered that one of the fringe benefits of a visit to the neighborhood drugstore was a quick, surreptitious glance at the gate-fold in *Playboy*. Timing is of the essence: one has to wait until the magazine rack is deserted and the druggist busy elsewhere, so that the awkward business of unfolding the gate, assessing the artwork (of necessity at arm's length, a difficult thing to do unobtrusively) and then refolding the gate and getting the issue back on the stand, can all be done with dispatch and discretion. If these innocent trepidations move some of my younger readers to incredulous laughter, they are invited to observe their fathers at any magazine rack. I do not, I think, exaggerate.

I was thus engaged one day in a drugstore just off campus when a young man and girl, both students, sauntered in. As the boy bought cigarettes, the girl paged idly through a copy of *Redbook*. The tobacco transaction completed, the boy moved casually to the magazine rack, picked up the copy of *Playboy* I had just the moment before put down—rather hastily, I fear—and flipped out the gatefold. "My God," I thought, "right out here in front of girl-friend and everybody." His glance was neither hasty nor covert, but rather cool, detached, judicious, appraisingly skeptical. And then the girl moved behind him, companionably resting her chin on his shoulder, while he shifted slightly to give her a better view. They remained thus for an affectionate moment, in silent, mutual communion over November's Bunny. "She's not as pretty as last month's," the girl finally said, returning to her *Redbook*. "No," said the boy, carefully refolding the gate, dropping the magazine back on the stack, moving down the aisle in search of more compelling reading matter—and leaving me in a state of cultural shock.

I do not mean *moral* shock; I have been observing college students too long for that. I mean *cultural* shock, the sort of hard jolt that the students of the '50s, earnestly intent upon romance, success, and split-level living, never gave me, the sense of cultural distance and conceptual alienation which perhaps only an anthropologist can really appreciate.

For this brief vignette suggested a way of communicating, and a way of handling facts, which I suspect is entirely alien to most members of my generation. Most striking was the openness, the frankness, the total lack of pose: the boy unabashedly manifesting his male sexuality, the girl accepting this as fundamental, so obvious and so normal as to be beyond comment. Here, if I read it correctly, was a moment of etched human simplicity and mutual, charitable acceptance—the sort of acceptance, beyond words, which in my generation only married couples ever achieved and then not often—uncluttered by moral qualms, equivocations, subterfuges or legalisms, untainted by giggles or guffaws, which often marked an older value system. It is dangerous to gen-

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eralize, but I suspect that only the supremely healthy of my generation experienced many such honest moments; we were and are, as we push toward 50, the inheritors of a sick, moribund morality, and it is this which defines most sharply the distance between the under-30 and the over-30.

The generational distance can be seen in a number of ways. Where these youngsters have seen "Bonnie and Clyde" and "The Penthouse," at their age I was following Mickey Rooney through the cotton-candy world of the "Andy Hardy" movies. Where they are turned on by the magnificently infantile sexuality of Brigitte Bardot, I thought Deanna Durbin was lovely. College students rock to the pelvic beat of "Lady Madonna" and the psychedelic sonorities of "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band"; at the same age I was doing a shambling fox trot to "I'm Gonna Buy A Paper Doll That I Can Call My Own." "Mairzy Doats" was swinging stuff in 1942.

One might argue that my generation exhibited a charming innocence, while this one's knowledgeability is frightening. But I think the case is precisely the opposite. Within the saccharine culture which crooned "Don't sit under the apple tree with anyone else but me . . ." and within which we were able to cheer wildly at the news that 100,000 people had been vaporized at Hiroshima, I entertained some ideas that could hardly be called innocent.

When I was in my late teens, I was told, and believed, that pictures of nude women inevitably aroused the libidinous appetite, and were therefore "occasions of sin" that one must at all costs avoid. Such pictures generated "impure thoughts," which were a matter for confession. And, following the confessional ritual, one discussed such things in darkness and in whispers.

When with the boys, of course, one would admit to having the "right" wrong thoughts, but in general the youthful period of sexual hyperintensity was characterized by a thoroughly suppressive hypocrisy. Good boys pretended, when with their elders and good girls, that they were asexual. Good girls sometimes helped things along by following the nuns' advice to wear something blue ("the Virgin Mary's color") on dates. Today's generation hardly knows what a hang-up is: the idea of giving the Virgin Mother a squeeze, even at one remove, is not conducive to peace of mind.

Now all of this is immoral; hypocrisy always is. Moreover, it is totally uninnocent. Most of my generation, Catholic or otherwise, were stripped of innocence as quickly as possible because, as everyone knows, and as Melville pointed out in *Billy Budd,* the innocent have a tendency to get into trouble fast. There is nothing new about this. I recall a scene from Fellini's "8½": a gaggle of schoolboys pay a magnificently fat and garish old behemoth a few pennies to dance for them on the beach. But soon the scandalized Brothers appear and herd the boys back to the schoolyard, where their evil is hammered into them until it is obvious, even to the dunderheads doing the hammering, that their innocence has been entirely destroyed.

The only reason that the good Brothers were able to obliterate innocence was that the boys took them seriously, just as I took my elders seriously back in the '40s. And this is the immense, crucial advantage that the young people of the '60s have: they find it impossible to take their elders seriously, and therefore, despite our best efforts, we have been unable to destroy their innocence.

Penurious Affluence

Unlike earlier generations, ours has been able to do on a national level what Jay Gatsby did personally in the '20s: give concrete, visible articulation to our invisible hopes and ideals, in electric carving knives, jazzy cars and the "house of our dreams" in suburbia. Thus, unintentionally, we have exposed our social and ethical penury, the niggardliness of our moral imagination.

And out of all of this, like honey from the lion, now comes a young generation which, having grown up with us, and having tasted in the most intimate way the emptiness of our lives, somehow has been set free, innocence intact, to find their own morality. They are, I suspect, the first innocent generation that America has produced.

What we who are over 30 do not, or will not, understand is that such innocence has as its inevitable correlate the lack of what we are accustomed to think of as a defined moral code. Because those under 30 have so obviously rejected our morality, we are resentfully inclined to call them immoral. But my experience on campus suggests that "immoral" does not fit the case. Neither does "amoral," or any other traditional term. Rather, I would call them *premoral,* which I would define as the quality of being morally concerned and morally aware, without necessarily being committed to a particular morality. We find it almost impossible to understand a generation which thinks moral concern to be much more important than morality. But it seems reasonably obvious that if one has to build a morality from scratch (and that is precisely the task which faces the under-30 generation, thanks to our failures), the essential first step is an assessment of reality as it is in itself, *before* the moral dimension is superimposed upon it, or derived from it, or both at once.

Generally speaking, the over-30 generation has never made such an assessment. A traditional version of reality was handed to us, along with a concomitant morality; the extreme case perhaps is the Catholic whose morality is based on an ontological assessment made during the eleventh century or even earlier. Most of us accept the idea of a just war; we have never doubted the validity of dividing sexual activity into licit and illicit; we have been

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more than comfortable with the idea of success as a central life-drive; we assume without question the superiority of the rational and discursive over the irrational, the intuitive and the instinctual.

The under-30 generation is not so bound. They are as free as we are unfree. They are in the process of taking a hard, clinical, *premoral* look at reality. To my mind one of the best expressions of this premoral ontological examination is the movie "Blow-Up," the central character of which is a photographer, significantly able to stop or freeze reality for closer examination. Developing pictures he took in a park, he discovers in the background of one print something that appears to be a corpse half-hidden in the shrubbery. Trying to understand what he is looking at, he begins a series of "blow-ups"—photographic enlargements—each one a more microscopic version of an indistinct reality, until reality finally dissolves in the random texture of the film emulsion. Correlated with this ontological blow-up is a sexual explosion, a romp for three, which shocked me, but which many of my students accepted quite casually as one-of-those-things-that-we-had-better-take-a-look-at.

This premoral assessment of reality is also apparent in the fascination many students have for lights, lighting and light shows: literally, they are interested in anything which offers to throw a new light on reality. They are particularly fascinated by the engineer's strobe light which technicians have been using for years to freeze or slow down the motion of high-speed machinery. Recent movies best express this ontological search for new light. The killing of Bonnie and Clyde takes in real time perhaps fifteen seconds, but seems to the viewer to be fifteen minutes of sustained horror. Bonnie on the car-seat jerks and dances like a slow-motion rag-doll, as hundreds of machine-gun slugs smash into her body; and Clyde takes an eternity to fall to the ground in a series of terrifyingly sustained strobe-segments. This scene finds a deep response in a generation that feels a desperate need to catch the ultimate, premoral truth of a reality immersed in a time-continuum moving so rapidly that assessment is very difficult. My generation can watch with considerable equanimity as napalm spews through a Vietnamese village. We are sure there is horror there, but the whole business takes less than a second, and then another and more comforting image appears on the TV screen. The under-30 generation would, if they could, stretch that napalm-instant into a strobe-hour—and then they would rub our noses in every micro-second of it.

Most difficult for the older generation to swallow, however, is young people's cool awareness of the usefulness of immorality, amorality and especially premorality in building the foundations for a moral vision. Again, there is nothing particularly new about this idea. Hawthorne's Hester Prynne achieved spiritual depth by committing adultery with Minister Dimmesdale; students these days get that message very quickly. The contemporary equivalent is "The Penthouse," which may turn out to be the most brilliant premoral movie of the decade; in comparison to it, "The Graduate" candy-coats the essential issues.

"The Penthouse" opens in the luxuriously furnished penthouse of an unfinished and deserted high-rise apartment building where a quiver-lipped anti-hero is shacked up with an equally quiver-lipped anti-heroine who is not his wife. For about half a reel we watch the two of them, in mawkish disregard of their real situation, saying the moral, proper things which are the natural, instinctive idiom of the over-30 generation. She especially professes great concern that they are not doing right, asking him to divorce his wife and marry her. She's a nice girl.

Into this oppressively moral love-nest come two absolutely amoral, funny scamps who tie up the man and, after feeding the girl whiskey and reefers, take her to bed serially. Between times, in Pinteresque dialogue, they strip away layer after layer of the moral pretensions of the hero, even persuading him to help them plan a raid on his own house. Having thus established the moral emptiness of two decent, law-abiding people, they abruptly disappear, their objectives achieved ("jobs" of this sort are apparently a way of life with them) without once resorting to violence, but simply by waving switchblades around and bad-mouthing their victims.

They are, in short, premoral knights-errant, Robin Badfellows going about the world doing pre-good. At the end, the nice girl knows that deep down, where it really counts, she's a lusty little bitch, and her companion knows beyond any possibility of escape or rationalization that he is a degenerate coward. Perceptive younger viewers find all of this not depressing, but elevating: the clear implication of "The Penthouse" is that having had premoral self-knowledge forced upon them by two beneficent bad guys, the anti-hero and anti-heroine are now in a position to begin to build a morality which may have some connection with reality.

This sort of premoral assessment happens not only in the movies that the young attend in droves; it also happens in college classroom discussions, often in such a way as to illuminate the generation gap. I recently had occasion to teach Hermann Hesse's *Steppenwolf* for the first time. The hero is a pompous German scholar pushing 50 who, while enjoying the comforts of middle-class life, still features himself as an outcast, an intellectual Ishmael, a wolf of the steppes, wild, free and dangerous. The novel's success depends on the reader's ability to conceive of a paunchy, bourgeois, comfort-loving wolf (an imaginative synthesis which I myself am unable to achieve).

At any rate, by an unlikely happenstance Steppenwolf falls in love with a beautiful young courtesan, Hermine, and this turns the novel, ostensibly, into a study of the tension between the life intellectual and the life sensual. The love of Steppenwolf and Hermine is not immedi-

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ately consummated, however. The stodgy Steppenwolf is inept in bed, and so Hermine sends one of her professional colleagues, Maria, to teach him the arts of love: Steppenwolf is surprised to find Maria all tucked in and ready for the first lesson when he returns home late one night.

Because I am over 30 and incorrigibly moral, I gagged on all of this, and said so in class. I was willing to admit the importance of the sensual life, and to entertain the idea that the life which is sexually meager is no life at all—but Hermine's physical-education approach to the problem was too much for me. And then I went on to say some rather automatic and entirely predictable things about love and fidelity and so on.

The class was not made up of sophisticated seniors or graduate students but of freshmen and sophomores. One might have expected them to go along with my rather conventional reaction to Steppenwolf's first love-in. Instead they appeared to find my moralistic attitude irrelevant. They obviously felt that I was missing the point. After a few minutes of somewhat evasive discussion, a student in the front row put the issue squarely. "Well," he said, "what's wrong with Hermine having Maria teach Steppenwolf the fine points? *If you're going to do it, you'd better know how to do it right.*" His brief manifesto elicited shy guffaws from most of the boys, and giggles and blushes from the girls, but it was obvious that the class was with the student in the front row, and against me. He had succinctly stated their own real feelings about Steppenwolf's education.

This classroom vignette, like my experience at the drugstore magazine stand, may be taken as evidence of a moral decline among American youth. But I cannot give it that interpretation. The students' reading of *Steppenwolf* is not immoral; it is simply premoral. It is that forthright, frank assessment of reality which must be made *before* a consequent moral judgment can hope for validity. And how can you fault a young man—or a generation—who arrive at the premoral judgment that what is worth doing is worth doing well?

Public works, not charity

BLACK HOUSES, BLACK JOBS

ERNEST GARVEY

Some weeks ago, a militant, Harlem-based group called the National Committee for a Confrontation with Congress (CWC) circulated a handbill which began:

We *don't* want
integration
public housing in white communities
welfare
anti-poverty

We *do* want
HR 16266. . . .

The following morning CWC received a phone call from Rep. Paul Fino, a conservative Republican who represents a white backlash Bronx constituency, inquiring what HR 16266 was and what he could do to help.

HR 16266 and the Committee for a Confrontation with Congress are the remarkable creations of two remarkable men, James Haughton, a Harlem labor leader, and Tim Cooney, a white organizer who recently left a $25,000 job as Assistant New York City Housing Administrator to work full time with Haughton and the Confrontation. HR 16266, according to its preamble, is "a bill to increase the funds authorized for existing programs to build low and moderate income housing, and for other purposes." In fact, the bill proposes to increase the level of federally-aided housing construction nearly *tenfold,* to 700,000 a year, at an annual cost of $5.1 billion.

CWC's theory is ingeniously simple: 700,000 new housing units a year in central city areas is the level it will take to rebuild the slums in the foreseeable future. In the process, about 500,000 well-paying construction jobs will be generated for under-employed Negro men. Recognizing that the problems of the ghetto transcend jobs and housing, CWC nevertheless believes that by focusing now on a single, tangible bill rather than an amorphous "urban Marshall plan," political clout can be maximized.

Cooney and Haughton convinced New York Democrat Jonathan Bingham to introduce CWC's bill. The group's first confrontation with Congress in late March picked up eight co-sponsors for HR 16266, mostly other New Yorkers. They returned to the Capitol April 25 with a busload for an intensive lobbying session. Emanuel Celler saw to it that they got a Judiciary Committee room for their meeting.

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A parade of Congressmen welcomed the group and pledged their support. Rep. Henry Reuss, a leading pragmatic liberal on the Housing Subcommittee, told them he didn't know if they could get quite 700,000 units, but that he'd work for 500,000 or 600,000. The backlog of deteriorated housing, Reuss reminded them, is the same today as it was twenty years ago when Congress passed the National Housing Act with its goal of decent, safe and sanitary housing for all. William Barrett of Philadelphia, the Subcommittee Chairman, expressed general support for the plan.

In actuality, the central preoccupation of the Housing Subcommittee in the coming weeks will be the Administration Housing bill, an omnibus package which modifies existing programs and proposes to boost low-and middle-income housing construction to about 300,000 annually, or four times the present rate. Bingham says he will try to work his bill into the Administration package in Committee. This will be no mean trick, but Haughton and Cooney have come up with an idea that just might catch the imagination of Congress, mostly because an intensive program to rebuild the ghetto, in the ghetto, and by the ghetto, would visibly help blacks, and mollify frightened whites. Jobs and housing are two of the most basic keys to the urban crisis.The Committee for a Confrontation with Congress combines a genuine grass-roots base with a salty political sophistication. It is at once militant, yet committed to "thinking legislatively" as Jim Haughton puts it.

The idea of a massive housing program explicitly designed to generate jobs for the ghetto originated about three years ago with Cyril Tyson of the New York City Commission on Manpower and Career Development and Kenneth Marshall of the Metropolitan Applied Research Corporation, a Ford-funded group directed by Psychologist Kenneth Clark. As Tim Cooney expresses it, defense spending, the space program, federal airline and highway subsidies, existing suburban-oriented FHA programs, education and research subsidies, are all essentially work programs for affluent white America. Yet, he says, "all the visible programs for black America are basically charity, and charity is always self-defeating." HR 16266 is simply a "good, fat public works program for the black man," which incidentally meets another critical social need—housing.

We asked ourselves, says Cooney, what kind of top-dollar careers are possible for an uneducated Negro—and we came up with two: entertainment and construction. You don't need a high school education to be an entertainer, but more black entertainers is hardly any solution. That left construction.

Jim Haughton is convinced from his experience organizing black construction workers that the real problem is not simply discrimination—at least in New York. The problem is not enough work to go round, and the people who got there first, mostly white unionists, are hanging on to the available jobs. New York has good anti-discrimination laws, and Haughton has made much progress in integrating such job openings as exist. Where few Negroes were found on a major construction contract, he simply took to calling the city contracting agency and threatening a sit-in—not in the contractor's office, but at the city agency. This usually brought quick results.

But Haughton wants more jobs; then the pressure will be off the building trades leadership to hire more blacks by displacing white unionists. Two factors suggest that most jobs generated by a building program of this volume would in fact go to ghetto dwellers. First, the latest federal housing legislation requires that federally-subsidized housing produce jobs for residents of the target areas. The Model Cities Act of 1965 required this, and its implementation has been the subject of a bitter hassle between construction unions and H.U.D., with the government finally taking a fairly tough stand. The Housing Act of 1968, as reported by the Senate Committee in early May, explicitly extends this requirement to all federal low- and middle-income housing programs. It will be more readily enforced if the volume is sufficient to generate plentiful jobs, as Haughton and Cooney propose. Secondly, with the ghetto becoming better organized and more militant, it becomes increasingly out of the question to bring a mostly-white construction crew into such areas as central Harlem, Newark, Watts, etc.

The Confrontation vehemently opposes the Administration proposal to generate job opportunities by creating low-skilled public sector jobs and subsidizing training programs in private industry. These have to be bottom-dollar jobs, says Tim Cooney. They can't possibly pay as well as unsubsidized jobs. Industry may benefit, but the race gap will continue.

Cooney is probably right. Last year the average graduate of the federal manpower training program earned $1.61 an hour. Negroes can get jobs now at fifty and sixty dollars a week, Haughton says. There are plenty of want ads for dishwashers and messenger boys. The need is for *good* jobs.

Cooney and Haughton initially tried to sell their plan to the established civil rights leadership. They rapidly discovered that most civil rights organizations are tax exempt. "Roy Wilkins can call for a Marshall plan, but he can't lobby for our bill." By the same token, the Poor People's Campaign thus far lacks hard legislative proposals. By and large, so does the Riot Commission Report, though it did endorse an annual housing construction rate of 600,000 units.

Shortly before he was murdered, Martin Luther King tentatively agreed to adopt HR 16266 as a specific demand. Haughton and Cooney are hopeful that Rev. Ralph Abernathy will agree to do so when the Washington march reaches full strength.

There is a confluence of political forces which bring

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the Confrontation's idea within the realm of possibility. King's assassination finally drove home the urgency of meaningful action to redeem the American promise to black America. The Riot Commission gave radical analysis and massive undertakings some respectability. The war may at last end, and both the Congress and the next Administration will be in the market for a program which is tangible, which finally will have some visible impact, which will not bear an impossible price tag, and which will be tolerable to the white majority. Cooney and Haughton think they have such a program.

The Committee for a Confrontation with Congress is now organizing support in several cities. A militant black organization committed to "thinking legislatively" may come to be very welcome indeed. The Confrontation wants to focus black political demands on this one bill. It backs extensive education and income-maintenance legislation too, but is convinced that tactics require identifying one clear demand at a time.

Tim Cooney believes that HR 16266 has two strong selling points. It will meet employment and housing needs right in the black community, and it will cool white fears. "When the brothers have some money in their pockets," he says, "then open housing becomes meaningful. If the black man wants to stay in Harlem, he'll have a decent place to live. If he wants to move to the suburbs, he won't scare the neighbors. And if he wants to go back to Africa, he'll have the carfare."

The agile Mr. Smith

ALTERNATIVES IN RHODESIA

JOHN HORGAN

To the average white inhabitant of Salisbury, the idea that Rhodesia is a "threat to world peace" is one to be dismissed with incredulous laughter. The streets are quiet, law and order is being maintained, and the only Africans being ground into the dust are those who have launched themselves across the Zambesi from Tanzania in a futile attempt to spark off a national uprising. The indigenous Africans are doing better in terms of health, social welfare and education than those of practically any other country on the continent with the probable exception of the Republic of South Africa. Why (ask the white Rhodesians) will the world not let us alone?

The short answer is that the Rhodesian situation contains all the prime ingredients for the manufacture of a state as racialist as its neighbor to the south, and the irony of that answer is that the measures which are at the moment being taken to prevent this happening are having, at least initially, a diametrically opposite effect to the one intended. Sanctions have hurt, certainly, but they have not crippled Rhodesia. This year's tobacco crop has already been sold, even if it has been sold at a murderously low price to middlemen who are already reaping their profit on a new set of invoices, and expert financial advice—some of it from Pretoria—has engineered a significant, if not spectacular, increase in the growth rate over its depressing performance in 1966, the first full year of sanctions. Were it not for a nationwide drought, which is the worst to hit the country since 1911 and whose full effects will not be apparent for several months to come, the wolf of economic collapse would have been removed from the doorstep.

Sanctions are welding Rhodesians into a kind of unity —the quarter of a million Rhodesians of European origin, that is. The views of the other four million or so Rhodesians of Asian, African and Colored extractions are not so readily ascertainable, although sanctions will confront them with further unemployment just as the drought may well confront them with starvation. Nor is it likely that their views will be sought.

An increasing number of white Rhodesians think—and are encouraged by their public information media to think —that there are only two choices before them: black dictatorship leading rapidly to chaos and anarchy, or a continuation of the firm paternalism which has been the guiding principle, at least in theory, of successive Rhodesian governments. For all that, Harold Wilson, the British Prime Minister, has refused to hold out for majority African rule before independence, and has lengthened the possible transitional period from five to between 10 and 15 years; the Rhodesian government is increasingly unwilling to accept any settlement which will not allow them to slow down or even reverse the process, should they consider it to be in the national interest. This is the crux of the dispute, and it conflicts squarely with the British Government's contention that the progress toward majority African rule should be concrete and irreversible.

Impatience with Britain's unwillingness to weaken this vital principle has led the Rhodesian government to adopt

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a second and even more perilous course—that of constructing its own constitution, while keeping open some, at least, of the lines between Salisbury and Whitehall. A constitutional review commission which was created just over a year ago has now finished its work, and the completed document, which is relatively mild and in some ways surprisingly "liberal" in tone, is going through the long tunnel of discussion which starts at the level of the executive, dips into the party caucus and then goes to the electorate in an amended form as a series of questions in a referendum before coming back to Parliament for eventual legislation.

Need for Recognition

In a sense, the liberality or otherwise of the proposed new Constitution is not as important as its overall effectiveness as an instrument in Rhodesia's campaign for world recognition. Rhodesia's crying need for such recognition has in fact been the only link which has bound her to Britain, and which forces her to keep negotiations open. A minimum growth rate of approximately six percent per year is needed to contain the massive increase in the working population within reasonable proportions; it would probably take 10 percent to bring the unemployment problem anywhere near a solution. In 1966 the growth rate was only two percent, and even though forthcoming 1967 figures will show a hopeful increase, they will still be far short of what is required. In brief, massive external investment is still needed, and would adequately repay the investors, provided only that there were adequate guarantees of stability.

At the moment this needed stability seems to be farther away than ever. The pleasant colonial atmosphere of Salisbury and the other major towns has been overlaid by a discreet but undeniable strain of racialism. As most people do in times of crisis, the Rhodesians have identified themselves to an extraordinary extent with the person of their Prime Minister, Ian Smith, and, in a mood which at times comes perilously close to hysteria, are looking to him for their salvation. Mr. Smith, however, has troubles of his own, not least from the aggressive right wing of his Rhodesia Front party, from which he seems either unwilling or unable to escape.

When Len Idensohn, an RF divisional chairman, resigned from the party midway through March to protest against what he described as the "creeping integration" the country was suffering at the hands of Mr. Smith, everybody waited to see which way the cat would jump—not least Mr. Smith. As things turned out, however, Mr. Idensohn's defection, insignificant in itself, has been more than helpful on a national level. For one thing, it has apparently forestalled a larger and more serious breakaway to the right of the RF and, for another, it has provided Mr. Smith, for the first time, with an opposition group to his political right. His policies therefore have been endowed with a tinge of something closely approaching respectability, in much the same way as the breakaway *verkampte* rightwingers in the South African Nationalist party provide many waverers with a convenient excuse for supporting Mr. Vorster.

In spite of this, however, there are still many members of the RF to whom white supremacy is not just a temporary expedient but a moral norm, and who consider that apartheid along South African lines is the only logical conclusion for their policies. In saying this, they ignore several rather startling realities, chiefly those concerned with population ratios. In South Africa, apartheid can be made to work, even if only temporarily, because the white population is outnumbered by something like three-and-a-half-to-one and this, relatively speaking, is strength. In Rhodesia, on the other hand, the ratio is much more disadvantageous to the European—about 14-to-one—and if one were to apply apartheid policy with any hope of success, virtually the entire country would have to be turned into a Bantustan except for the eastern highlands. This is a policy to which the politically powerful big European ranchers would not take very kindly, and it would cause extraordinary damage to the economy of the country, based as it is on a high degree of interpenetration between European, African and other elements.

While Mr. Smith continues his attempts to keep each of his two options open—his own constitutional one and the possibility of a negotiated settlement with Britain—several other factors are emerging which may at any moment terminate either or both of them. The short-term ones include the drought and the possible effect of stepped-up sanctions; the long-term one of most significance is the inevitable growth in the African population, due to reach some eight million by 1980. This places Mr. Smith in a dilemma. He must educate the African to the point where he can contribute usefully to the country's economic growth, but is faced with the problem of political consciousness that education usually brings in its train. Even here he is not having as much success as he might have wished for: the amount being contributed by the State for African education has been pegged at two percent of the G.N.P. by a combination of economic and political factors, but the amount of money that will have to be found is increasing sharply.

The Government is trying to bridge the widening financial gap by means of community development, and here its bland assertion that "perhaps the most remarkable feature of the great educational advance achieved in Rhodesia during the past 20 years has been the African's capacity for self help" contrasts sharply with the more common argument that the Africans are a lazy, shiftless lot of Kaffirs and that this is why the Europeans have to govern them so firmly. In principle the community development idea is clearly a good one: in practice it seems to be working out as a scheme of separate development,

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and one, moreover, in which the areas which need money most will be those where the people are least well equipped to raise it by their own efforts. This situation —and the growing number of unemployed school-leavers of all ages—is leading rapidly to a crisis of expectation among African youth which will hardly remain unarticulated for very much longer.

White Racialist Solution

As the Smith government steers an unsteady course between the opposing perils and veers increasingly toward a white racialist solution, however fancifully dressed up, moderate and liberal Rhodesian opinion finds itself in a cruel dilemma, laced with nostalgia for the days of the United Federal Party and the golden hopes of a genuinely multi-racial society. Opposition is ruthlessly curbed: a series of draconian regulations about censorship, the formation of associations, the publication of their aims and the holding of meetings, all ostensibly adopted in an attempt to prevent people from rocking the national boat, or in the interests of national security, make the evolution of a coherent political opposition among the 80,000 European voters increasingly difficult. The sheer frustration one encounters among people of this kind has to be experienced to be believed: many of them have already left the country, and others are planning to do so if the situation gets any worse, while the immigrants who are replacing them are by no means of the same caliber and in many cases represent a lower middle-class attempt to escape from the problems caused by immigration in Britain and elsewhere. In a sense, even the old U.F.P. spirit is inadequate, in that its strategy relies too heavily on an initial appeal to the white voters, who have already been alienated and are becoming increasingly hostile to any notion of African advancement, however limited.

There are, however, still people of all races in Rhodesia who believe that an attempt to form a fully multiracial association is the country's only hope of salvation —who reject the U.F.P frustration as they reject the Smith government's inherent racialist tendencies, and who believe that there is still time for one last, desperate effort. They need very many things that they are far from sure of getting—first-rate leadership, finance, and encouragement from abroad—but they are hoping that African political consciousness has outgrown the stage of its development when it boycotted the 1961 Constitution, and that it will be their ally in their attempt to achieve by constitutional means and internally what external pressures have been so far powerless to achieve. They can but try: and if they succeed, they will be well on the way to creating something totally new in Africa. But nobody is suggesting that it will be easy, and one of the things keeping them going is the frightening clarity with which they perceive the alternative.

RECORDS

The B-Minor Mass is another monumental work of Bach which is generally accepted as a masterpiece from first note to last, but in which, it seems to me, one must distinguish between what W. J. Turner characterized as "those really creative moments which are popularly called inspired," and those in which the prodigious technical powers operate without inspiration, and which are interesting only to the academic musician "with the score in his hands and his soul long defunct." Those really creative moments occur in the writing for chorus—the high points being the second *Kyrie,* the *Gratias agimus, Qui tollis* and *Cum sancto spiritu* of the *Gloria*, the *Sanctus.* The writing for solo voices, on the other hand—except the bass aria *Et in spiritum sanctum*—I find not really expressive, and uninteresting. Klemperer, on the Angel stereo records, paces the work effectively; with only 50 members of the New Philharmonia and 35 of the BBC Chorus he achieves clarity of texture; and his excellent soloists are Agnes Giebel, Janet Baker, Nicolai Gedda, Franz Crass for one bass aria and Hermann Prey for the other.

Frühbeck de Burgos conducts an excellent performance of Mozart's *Requiem* on an Angel stereo record, with the New Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus and a solo group comprising Edith Mathis, Grace Bumbry, George Shirley and Marius Ritzler. The sound needs additional bass for the string basses to be heard sufficiently.

An unfamiliar early work of Handel, his *Dixit Dominus*, on a Vanguard stereo record, turns out to have superb choral writing and a fine aria for solo soprano. Eberhard Wenzel conducts the excellent performance with the Choir of the School for Choral Music, Halle, the Chamber Orchestra of Berlin, Ingeborg Reichelt, soprano, and Lotte Wolf-Matthäus, alto. The sound needs additional bass.

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Then and Now

It was in August 1949 that Father Emmanuel Jacques, a missionary from Indonesia, published in *Commonweal*, an article entitled, "Self-Sufficiency for Native Peoples."

"I think the time is ripe . . . to look beyond the mere struggle against suffering. This 'beyond' almsgiving will be to help our brothers to their right to the fruits of the earth, which are intended, by God's justice, as theology teaches us, for the men who need them. Above all, those fruits of the earth which their sweat and God's generosity have caused to grow, these jewels, these embroideries, this oil, this steel, which to date have been the gift of their sweat to those cleverer or stronger. . . .

"If we have a profound and intelligent pity for the relative ignorance among many millions of people in Asia, Africa, and Oceania; if we have pity for the rags and the hunger of almost all of these men, who are not even rich enough to wash with soap, we should have the courage to work so that our children will not have any longer to be their benefactors.

"And that is why I think that today, to create specialists among them, to help them found unions, cooperatives, institutes of research and of economic and social teaching, agricultural institutes, etc., are greater signs of charity than nursing the sick. . . ."

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And the music of the sixteenth-century composer, Adrian Willaert, on an Odyssey stereo record, includes a magnificent motet for six voices, *O crux splendidior; Dulce lignum*, and several lovely secular pieces, sung beautifully by the Ambrosian Consort and Singers under Denis Stevens' direction.

In the performance of *Dido and Aeneas* conducted effectively by Mackerras on a Deutsche Grammophon Archive stereo record, Purcell's extraordinary writing for solo voice is sung impressively by Tatiana Troyanos—though her voice is a little harsh—Barry McDaniel and Sheila Armstrong, with the excellent Monteverdi Chorus of Hamburg and Chamber Orchestra of the North German Radio. Again the sound needs additional bass. The earlier performance on an Oiseau-Lyre record has the more beautiful singing of Janet Baker; the one on imported Odeon ALP-1026 has the great singing of Flagstad.

Neither Grace Bumbry's contralto nor Fischer-Dieskau's baritone sounds like the *castrato* voice of the Orpheus in the first performance of the original Italian version of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice;* but one would prefer the performance with Bumbry on Angel stereo records if her voice were not tremulous and harsh in its upper register, and if she produced continuous legato phrases; and one must prefer the performance with Fischer-Dieskau on Deutsche Grammophon stereo records because he deploys his fine voice in legato phrases that are musically sensitive and expressively eloquent. Moreover, his singing, and that of Edith Moser (Amor) and Gundula Janowitz (Eurydice), is heard in a context of playing by the Munich Bach Orchestra that is enlivened by Karl Richter's conducting, whereas the playing of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in the Angel performance is not thus enlivened by Vaclav Neumann's. (I might add that Bumbry's inability to sing legato phrases makes her performances of German songs on an Angel stereo record impossible to listen to.)

Verdi's *Ernani* is a very early work, and an uninteresting one. The performance, conducted effectively by Schippers on RCA Victor records, has Leontyne Price and Carlo Bergonzi singing musically and expressively; but Price's voice hasn't in its upper range the extraordinary beauty it still has lower down, and Bergonzi's seems to have lost much of its velvet. The other principals are the excellent Ezio Flagello and adequate Mario Sereni.

The newly edited Toscanini performance of Verdi's *Aida* on VIC-6113 (avoid the pseudo-stereo VICS [e]!) refutes the myths about his "fast and rigid" tempos that "thwarted" singers' attempts to sing expressively, and about his use of only the inexperienced and inferior singers who would submit to his tyranny. From first note to last the work flows with the characteristic Toscanini plasticity and grace, the Verdi *espansione*—these governed by the unfailing Toscanini sense for coherent shape. And the beat that is so flexible in relation to the

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music is unyielding in relation to the singers only in compelling them to operate within the coherently plastic flow—to fit their coherently shaped vocal phrases into the coherently shaped orchestral context—which doesn't prevent them from singing with affecting expressiveness. It is something which the Metropolitan star Richard Tucker is willing to do; but actually his voice lacks the warmth, luster and ease of flow of the voices of the less celebrated Herva Nelli, Eva Gustavson and Giuseppe Valdengo. They are the best voices available to Toscanini, with which he produces a performance that is the most accurate, most authentic in style, most effective and moving, on records today. The re-edited sound needs reduction of treble and addition of bass. (It is true, as I reported, that the retail dealers are not stocking the mono Toscanini Victrolas, but not, as they have claimed, because Victor's wholesale distributors are not stocking them. The distributors have both mono and fake stereo; it is the retailers who refuse to stock the mono. But I am told of one place in New York, Chambers Record Corporation, that does stock the mono; and I mention this for interested readers.)

Handel's 12 Concerti Grossi Op. 6 for strings, which include pages of superb writing, are performed well on Mercury stereo records by the English Chamber Orchestra under Leppard.

B. H. HAGGIN

SWIM HOMEWARD

THE SCREEN

I'll probably never understand the eccentricities of the studio publicity departments. For some reason, never explained, those in charge at Columbia Pictures were reluctant to preview "The Swimmer" for the critics. Perhaps they felt that this film, based on John Cheever's fascinatingly strange story that first appeared in *The New Yorker*, is just too strange for the critics—and maybe even the general movie-going public. It is true that Cheever's tale (about a middle-aged man from upper-middle-class suburbia who decides to swim the eight miles to home by going through the pools of his friends and neighbors) is a mystifying fantasy that is not for everybody, but it is a compelling story that stays with its readers. The movie made from it, in an extraordinarily handsome production by Frank Perry and Roger Lewis, is probably not for everybody either, but who wants to see a film for everybody?

I, for one, found "The Swimmer" engrossing right from its off-beat beginning to its far-out, sad, unsolved ending. Eleanor Perry (who with husband-Frank startled the movie world several years ago with their "David and Lisa") adapted the Cheever story and wrote the screenplay. Perhaps Cheever's short story, which is more mental than physical, isn't exactly material for movies which insist on visualization. Cheever's thoughtful, eerie tale runs only 16 pages in his collection called *The Brigadier and the Golf Widow*. It merely hints at Neddy Merrill's odd behavior and background. Eleanor Perry expands the hints and adds to them with her own interpretations. Now, as Neddy dog-trots from pool to pool on this gorgeous summer day in the country, we get to know a little more about the various people with whom he visits beside the pools; and as the day advances we get to know much more about him—not everything, but enough to realize he's somewhat of a bastard who cheated on his wife with a mistress he dumped, who didn't pay his bills and who borrowed money from some of these people whose hospitality he's accepting now, and who hasn't, even now as an aging lothario, quite grown up. All in all, he's probably no better or worse than his friends and neighbors. So much for suburbia and the country-club set!

Burt Lancaster is excellent as Neddy, the once-athlete who refuses to give up as he swims, trots, and shows off before the girls. Perhaps Lancaster doesn't always convey the difficult mental problems and tortures through which Neddy is going, but he comes close—and physically in his running, jumping, swimming stints he is just right. Outstanding in the large supporting cast are Janice Rule as the embittered ex-mistress, Kim Hunter as a kindly but money-conscious neighbor, and several others, especially the charming newcomer Janet Landgard as the young girl who once had a crush on Neddy when she baby-sat for his daughters. "The Swimmer" doesn't present a new picture of surburban life, but it does show another portrait of suburban morality in none-too-glowing terms. And all the roles are well played under Frank Perry who also directed the picture, all of which was photographed in the luxurious country-club environs of Connecticut.

"The Swimmer" never offers an explanation for Neddy. Is he recovering from a nervous breakdown? Has he just escaped from an asylum? Is the whole picture stream-of-consciousness stuff while he is reliving and re-discovering his past on an analyst's couch? What with the modern trend in movies that refuse to come up with answers (like "2001," "Blow-Up," and the forthcoming "Rosemary's Baby"), "The Swimmer" is another item in the no-pat-answers series. If you can stand not knowing everything about everybody, you will find "The Swimmer" as interesting as I did. Anyway, there's the lovely color photography of Connecticut and skies. I still think Columbia's publicity people should have shown the picture—at least to reviewers who don't mind being disturbed by concentrating on a man and a society that are looking at themselves and don't like what they see.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

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BOOKS

The line between journalism and literature: thin, perhaps, but distinct

The Armies of the Night

NORMAN MAILER

New American Library, $5.95

JOSH GREENFELD

One of the myths that has made it in our time is that the novel is dead: Long live the new king—non-fiction. Not surprisingly, its chief exponents are non-fictionalists, high-brow little-magazine essayists and editors, and lowdown daily newspaper columnists and journalists, who keep tossing the notion self-servingly aloft. They like to boast of a new journalism which employs the traditional novelistic tools—impressionistic close-ups, tart asides, gratuitous reflections, intensely personal reactions—to cover the Big Story which resides out there in the entertainment market place or the political arena.

However, the line between journalism and literature, though perhaps a thin one, remains a distinct one; and if the tools have become the same, the trades are still decidedly different. (The relationship is something like that between spoken German and Yiddish or between written Yiddish and Hebrew: journalism and literature may sometimes sound and look alike but actually they are always worlds apart—all but untranslatable into each other.) Journalism pursues the moment, literature stalks out after the eternal; journalism focuses on the event, literature draws its bead on character; journalism seeks out a view with room for objectivity, literature lines up a sight through the most private of prisms. At its best, journalism achieves history; the aim of literature is nothing less than art itself.

But now along comes Norman Mailer, seeking the best of both possible worlds, advertising this new work for himself as: History as Novel, The Novel as History—but, in effect, reducing the myth of the new journalists, which is at once basically anti-intellectual and anti-creative, to its proper *papier mâché* matrix. And he has done so hopefully, in one of those salutary acts of mock-destruction he periodically seems capable of. For he has taken the genre of personal non-fiction reporting and, by drawing it out to its furthermost extreme, pulled the string on it. The virtuosity of his own abilities has described its limitations, and swiftly moving events seem intent on conspiring to do the rest. Perhaps, henceforth, no novelist or reporter will commit himself so impassionedly to an incident, journalistic heart and novelistic soul, without first weighing its cosmic ripples just a trifle more soberly and reflectively.

Since *Harper's* unprecedentedly devoted almost all of its March issue to the 90,000-word first section, and *Commentary* alloted a chunky segment of the prime pages of its April issue to the remaining 30,000-word section, almost every one knows by now that this is Mailer's account of the weekend of protest against the Vietnam war held in Washington last October. And it is as complete and thoroughgoing an account as one could hope for. It is all here again: the speech by Coffin at the Department of Justice and the inaudible speeches at the Lincoln Memorial rally; the crush of the march across the bottleneck of a single Potomac bridge and the activists' attempt to storm the Pentagon; the busting of many, including Mailer, and their long night in jail; the brutal beatings incurred by others but their steadfast refusal to desert their Pentagon parking lot bonfires during the same long chilly night.

And there is Mailer himself barking like a literary lion at a cocktail party, biting like a Lenny Bruce at a fund-raising theatrical, or describing his fellow notables in precise and exact *cinéma vérité*, single frame, stop action terms: "Robert Lowell gave off at times the unwilling haunted saintliness of a man who was repaying the moral debts of ten generations of ancestors."

"Dwight Macdonald was the operative definition of the gregarious and could talk with equal facility and equal lack of personal observation to an Eskimo, a collector from the New York Department of Sanitation, or a U.N. diplomat."

Paul Goodman looked "like the sort of old con who had first gotten into trouble in the YMCA and had not spoken to anyone since."

In fact, readers of the *Harper's* section alone—or anyone who attended the protest himself—might have felt there was also simply too much Mailer in close-up: Mailer, the muser; Mailer, the mordaunt; Mailer, the militant; Mailer, the megalomaniac. But the second section, The History as Novel (or *Commentary* section) offers a brilliant panoramic vista of the whole scene. For Mailer suddenly zooms back, leaving character Norman to fade out in the distance like a little man as Pfc. and then he lets old armchair general Mailer take over and preside over a final briefing.

Here he delves into the history of the demonstration, its background and organization, how it all got started in the first place, and presents the militant's version—never fully reported in the mass media—of the violence it ended in. He analyzes exactly where the new revolutionists' politics-first-program-later planning went wrong and makes suggestions as to how it all might have gone right with better strategy. Finally, he invokes a claim of success for that weekend as a metaphor in the underground fight to stop the list of America toward the "most fearsome totalitarianism the world has ever known."

As a new journalist, it should be noted in passing, Mailer commits all of the old sins a cub reporter might be guilty of in covering a one-alarm blaze: he tries to fan the fire into another Chi-

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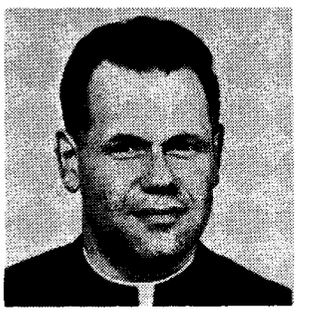
cago holocaust; he uses the occasion to speak in some old term-paper reflections on the symbolism of fire; and he becomes hung up on the minor victim who provides the best interview in the book.

But even if Mailer had performed his self-proclaimed journalist-historian's chores more traditionally—and professionally ("Journalism," Gene Fowler used to say, "is history shot on the wing")—it is still difficult to conceive of that Washington Weekend as more important than a footnote. From a May vantage point, the doveish winds of change—my radio has just broadcast news of agreement between Hanoi and Washington over Paris as a site for the first peace talks—seem to have blown aside any loftier possible pretensions: and now the events of last October at the Pentagon have the same musty feel as a remembrance of a May Day Parade scuffle in Union Square thirty years past, and perhaps the same ultimate significance in underground history as, say, the second Robeson Peekskill concert of twenty years ago. For if literature's daughter, the novel, is a "bitch," as Mailer has written, then history is certainly an even more fickle mother.

As a novel-as-novel, *The Armies of the Night,* however, must be highly recommended. For without the moment there is still always the man within, the existential Mailer, who is our best—if most exasperating—novelist; for he remains one of the very few artistic talents in this country capable of producing "the personification of a vision which will enable one to comprehend other visions better." In fact, *The Armies of the Night,* which is certainly the best piece of writing turned out by an American author so far this year, proves again that literature is Mailer's most durable turf; that the novel form is his true beat and calling, the only valid existential match for his literary lance; and that there is probably a great deal of danger to his sense of style—in his not responding directly to its challenges without trying to hedge his way with distracting and foredoomed side-bets—the mark of a classic loser.

Confronting the issues



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Rosemary Ruether

The Church Against Itself

Foreword by Gabriel Vahanian

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Theological Explorations

PAUL VAN BUREN

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WILLIAM HAMILTON

When the death-of-God controversy broke in the fall of 1965, Gabriel Vahanian claimed (rightly) he had been misunderstood; Tom Altizer and I tried to enjoy the melee and said yes to reporters and producers; Paul Van Buren remained non-polemic, non-defensive, and silent. In this collection of eight essays, he resurfaces slightly, nearly as mysterious visible as he was when invisible. Four have been reprinted elsewhere, two are to be reprinted shortly, and two are previously unpublished.

Van Buren is an engaging man, and a thoroughly engaging writer. His style has an impeccable cleanliness, and his candor and unpretentiousness shine through every sentence he writes. There may be a few surprises for the reader here. Van Buren seems less inclined than in his *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel*, to define "secular" as non-religious; indeed, he appears to want to re-establish some form of the *homo religiosus* or religious *a priori*. His own self-understanding seems to have undergone a subtle shift, as well. In the earlier book, he was very clearly the theologian, making use of a particularly philosophical discipline for the purpose of clarifying large portions of the classical Christian tradition. Today, he is not the theologian using philosophy, not even the philosophical theologian, but a metaphysician in the older American sense, trying to clear up some of the words that some of us use when we talk of theological matters. It appears that the possibility of either the Christian life or of Christian thought does not engage him today as centrally as in the past.

His main mentors, he states, are Wittgenstein, Wisdom and William James, and his essay on the latter, "William James and Metaphysical Risk" is, I think, the outstanding piece in the book, and a very fine piece of detective work.

It is not wholly clear whether Van Buren has decided that we can utter the name of God today or not. In a fascinating comparison between Wittgenstein and James on the relation of language and reality, he seems to identify being able to speak of God with the reality of God. But the problem is that he sometimes seems to suggest that we'd better not try to speak of him at all (because he is not there, not because our finite language is inadequate), and he sometimes is tempted to follow James' proposal of "a limited God within a pluralistic universe," which is certainly a form of speech, and fairly clear speech at that. His interesting study of the parables of Jesus reflects this ambivalence. When Jesus talks about the kingdom of God, is he talking only about a new quality of being in the world, or is he also talking about a Heavenly Father? And if both, are we committed to both; if not to the second, can we still lay claim to the first?

Van Buren would say that both the experiment of a finite God and the experiment of no speech about God at all are possible, and that since we cannot

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yet decide between their validity, we had better cover all our shots. "Not one of these essays represents my position," he writes, and I want to object to this mode of address. I think the reason I find the theologian in Van Buren waning is precisely because of this decline of passion and willingness to commit himself to his own views, even when they are fragmentary and tentative. There is too little willingness to take responsibility for one's present form of error here, to stick one's neck out, and too much of an attempt, conscious or otherwise, to put off criticism by insisting on the obvious truth that all our insights are relative and corrigible. This may or may not be a weakness; if it is, it is a slight one in an admirable collection.

A final note for Catholic readers. It may be possible to locate Van Buren's role in the continuing theological debate by noting the Catholic affinities felt by the so-called Protestant radical theologians. I would point to Charles Davis as something like a Catholic counterpart to radical theology as I see it; Thomas Altizer might be inclined to cite Teilhard de Chardin; while Paul Van Buren, with this new book, shows affinities with the philosophical work being undertaken by Michael Novak, Leslie Dewart and Eugene Fontinell.

Listen Ruben Fontanez

JAY NEUGEBOREN

Houghton Mifflin, $4.50

DAN WAKEFIELD

I wonder how many people—white or black—really mean it when they ask the writer to "tell it like it is." Can many of them really bear to hear it? This novel should provide a good test—for white liberals, black militants, red-white-and-blue patriots, and in fact for citizens of every hue and cry. If they want some of the real racial tensions and complexities of life in the great city ghettos to be revealed as they really are, they only need turn to *Ruben*, and decide if they want to hear it at all. I would guess that many would eagerly rush back to the pages of, say, The Kerner Report, or the Moynihan Report, or *U.S. News & World Report*, and find comfort in the rhetorical "challenges" stated in "serious" facts, figures and faceless generalizations.

In *Ruben* there are no comforting statistics (no matter how dire the statistic, it is somehow comforting because it seems to make order out of a problem, make it seem concrete and manageable) but only individual screams, aches, murders, hungers—and yes, complex loyalties and loves, sometimes transcending the hates and intra-minority prejudices, and sometimes mixed up with them, tangled in contradiction and ironies. The way it really is.

Harry Meyers, a Jewish schoolteacher one year away from blessed retirement, is the benumbed protagonist, moving almost trance-like through the subways and streets and classrooms of the city jungle he inhabits and has so far managed to survive in, by a combination of cunning and painfully developed toughness and resignation. "I

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was not born to change anything," he explains. "It is enough . . . to survive."

Like a weary runner concentrating on the finish of the race (the end of the school year), he tries to let nothing else distract him. His strategy of non-involvement overrides the sympathy and affection he has for Nadia, a fifteen-year-old Puerto Rican wife and mother, who lives in his apartment building with a hot-tempered husband, and often seeks Harry's help. Coming home one night to find Nadia screaming down the stairs, fleeing her husband, Harry listens calmly as she says: " 'You got to do something' . . . and presses her nails into my coatsleeves. Her young Spanish face is beautiful in the shadows. 'I am an old man,' I say, and shrug. I jingle my keys and the mailbox opens. . ."

He adopts the same detached attitude toward his students, but he explains—as if for the record rather in his own defense or justification—"You must understand something: I was not always like this."

By one of the many ironies of minority migratory history, Meyers has ended up teaching Hebrew to the Puerto Rican students of a public school, and teaching Spanish to a class of Chassidic Jewish students at a Yeshiva. The public school had once been made up largely of Jewish students, and the parents had demanded that the required Spanish language instruction be replaced by Hebrew (" 'a useful and traditional language,' they said") but when the Jews migrated upward out of the neighborhood and were replaced by migrations of Negroes and then Puerto Ricans, Hebrew remained in the curriculum. At the same time, the Yeshiva decided it would be wise to have some Spanish instruction: "I had been hired," Meyers explains, "to train their young men in the language needed to deal in rents, in loans, in the sale of jewels."

Meyers calls the young Chassidic students "My cowboys," and the Puerto Ricans "My monkeys." To survive, and teach, and maintain order, Meyers has adopted a policy of stern discipline: pulling of ears, twisting of arms, a show of force; tactics which have earned him the nickname "Mad-Man Meyers," and an accompanying respect. But one troublesome young Puerto Rican student breaks through the careful shell of Meyers' indifference and disciplinary tactics. Meyers and the student, Ruben Fontanez, strike up a wary friendship. It is not the Mr. Chips sort of student-teacher relationship, but one of betrayal and fear all mixed up with mutual respect and affection, each groping in his own way to help the other in his respective battle for survival.

The prejudice of each minority against the others is part of the fabric of the story and the action, as when Danny Santini, an Italian whose only son was killed by a Negro, says to Mr. Meyers "The way to take care of Bedford Stuyvesant [a Negro ghetto] . . . is with bombs." This is not pretty, but it is the way a great many people feel and think, and it strikes me as a healthy thing to be read and discussed and admitted.

From watching TV in the weeks following the assassination of Dr. King, one would think that we are all one big happy family, with maybe just a few crackpots running loose. That is a very comfortable thought, and a very deceiving one. The prejudice and hatreds of one group against another, and vice-versa, animosity squared and tripled back, multiplied by myth and half-truth and distorted experience, are presented here in the raw, naked shapes they assume in real life, rather than in Brotherhood speeches.

The author is saying *Listen*—and he doesn't just mean Ruben Fontanez, either.

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(Continued from page 347)

tion, particularly in combination. In fact, the greater the misuse, the stricter their regulation tends to become. Guns, on the other hand, have but one use: to destroy—person, animal or thing. Yet they are remarkably free of regulation. Their misuse, even to the point of national disaster, results not in strong

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controls but inane (and, unfortunately, successful) defenses like the above.

JOHN DEEDY

DeLubac's 'Relevance'

Olympia Fields, Ill.

To the Editors: The main point of Anselm Atkins' rather obscure and confusing review of DeLubac's *Mystery of the Supernatural* (May 3) seems to be that DeLubac's work is not "relevant" to modern times. However, he never makes clear his reasons why he believes the work is not relevant. He mentions the use of the Latin language, but seems to imply more basically that the whole problem which DeLubac treats is largely an irrelevant matter and is not that with which modern theology should concern itself. Further, the fact that this is an *ex professo* historical work—though I believe its benefits are much greater than merely historical—seems to bother Fr. Atkins. It is with these points that I must take issue.

From study of modern sacramental theology and from discussion on topics among concerned clergy, there seems to be no more pressing issue. For example, in the November convention of the Association of Chicago priests, the whole underlying issue was the relationship between the sacred and the profane, the natural and the supernatural . . . Further, the dualism whose existence Fr. DeLubac stresses in his opening chapter is a real problem.

The fact that DeLubac's book is professedly an historical study on the relationship between nature and grace should likewise bother no one. This is especially true in view of the fact, cited in the first chapter of the work and referred to constantly throughout the book, that the thought of Aquinas on this matter has been misconstrued since the time of Cajetan and Suarez. If Aquinas' view is the correct outlook on reality, and I believe it is, then its importance is more than merely historical.

Underlying Fr. Atkins' whole review seems to be an attitude that a treatment of a Christian problem that borders on the metaphysical or the ontological can not be relevant to our age, nor to the problem itself. If by relevancy we mean directly useful or immediately functional, then of course this is true. But, if we mean that metaphysics or ontology is unreal or is too abstract, rather than at the heart of reality, then the statement is false. In the sense that metaphysics treats of a depth perspective in reality, it is the most relevant. This is the grandeur, yet the poverty, of metaphysics . . .

Truth will be relevant to the age, if we begin to theologize from the data around us. But a theology whose primary criterion is relevancy and efficacy cannot point to the theological dimension that pervades all reality.

FRED VAN FLETEREN, O.S.A.

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JOSH GREENFELD is a free-lance critic and journalist, whose novel *O For A Master Of Magic* will be published in the fall.

WILLIAM HAMILTON is the author of *The New Essence of Christianity*.

DAN WAKEFIELD is the author of *Island in the City: The World of Spanish Harlem*, and *Supernation at Peace and War*.

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